

News Release



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NDI ANNOUNCES INTERNATIONAL DELEGATION TO PAKISTAN ELECTIONS

A 25-member international delegation, sponsored by the Washington-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), will visit Pakistan for the November 16 National Assembly elections. These elections are the first party-based electoral contests since 1977.

The delegation, which includes bipartisan U.S. representation, will be led by former Minister of Labour, Ruairi Quinn of Ireland and NDI President Brian Atwood. The purpose of the delegation visit, according to Atwood, is to "underscore the vital role a credible electoral process can play in bringing about a stable democracy."

The delegation is being organized in response to a recommendation by a six-person, bi-partisan survey mission that visited Pakistan October 10-18, 1988. In their report, the NDI survey team noted that "[a] comprehensive framework for procedurally correct elections has been devised," but that the "actual implementation of the written legal and administrative procedures will be the key factor in assessing the fairness of the elections." The team commended the Election Commission for fulfilling its responsibilities in a "fair and expeditious manner."

The delegation will meet in Islamabad on November 13-14 for briefings with government officials, representatives of the election commission and political party leaders, before dividing into teams covering Islamabad and the four provincial capitals on election day. The delegates will

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regroup on November 17 to discuss their respective experiences, and several members of the delegation will remain for the November 19 Provincial Assembly elections.

The delegation includes political party leaders, election experts and legal scholars from Ireland, Malaysia, Turkey, Tunisia, United Kingdom and United States. Attached is a list of the delegation members.

The delegation leaders will hold a press briefing on Monday, November 14 in Islamabad.

Chaired by former Vice President Walter F. Mondale, NDI conducts nonpartisan political development programs overseas. By working with political parties and other institutions, NDI seeks to promote, maintain and strengthen democratic institutions and pluralistic values in new and emerging democracies.

During the past two years, NDI has sent four missions to Pakistan to assist the transition to democracy. NDI has also organized international delegations for elections in the Philippines and Haiti, and, most recently, sponsored a 55-member international delegation for the October 5, 1988 Chilean plebiscite.

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